

Duxbury Clipper, Wednesday, March 8, 1995

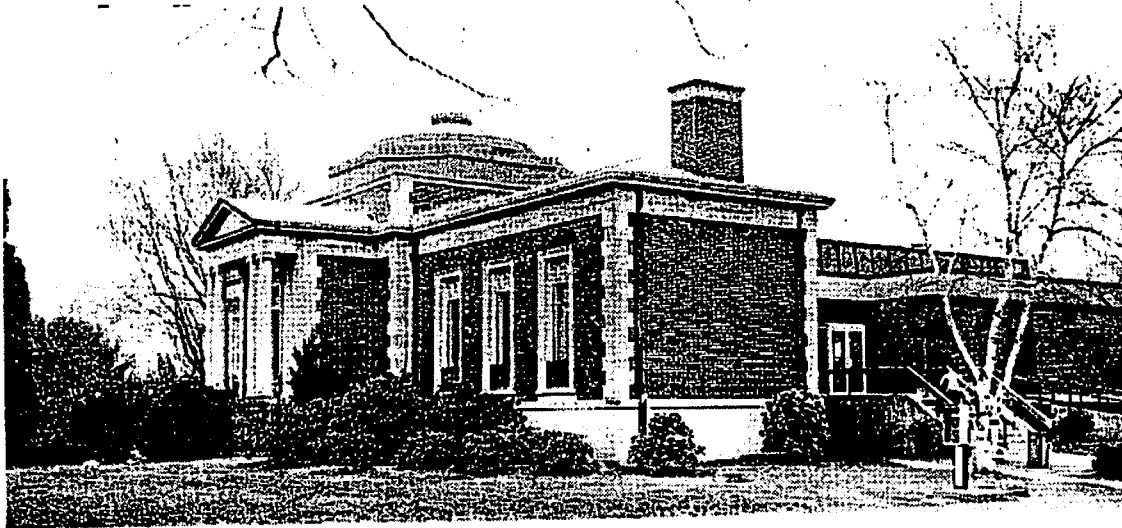
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Taxpayer Issues Corner

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The Board of the Duxbury Taxpayers' Assn debated the major issues that will face taxpayers at Town Meeting and we have summarized our discussions for your review. Pay particular attention to the library issue since our Board has spent significant time discussing this particular issue. We urge all taxpayers to come to Town Meeting and vote because your vote is a determining factor in how your tax money will be spent. Your vote does matter.

members questioned the proposed costs to comply with ADA regulations, but the opinion of the Board was to respect the numbers provided by the trustees. The majority of the DTA Board concluded we should not lose the 2.2 million in state funds; if the building had a multi-use function, the financial investment for ADA compliance would not be so great; and the terms of the original bequest appear to be satisfied if the building is used for a reading room or other cultural, educational, or recreational purposes.



Library Expansion Project

A majority of the DTA Board is in favor of the library expansion project into the Upper Alden Building, but debate occurred over the following critical issues:

•Does the Town need this new, expanded facility?

All age groups would benefit from the project since the increased space would provide a better children's room, designated areas for reading and browsing, public meeting rooms, and space for senior citizen activities. The physically challenged population would benefit since full ADA compliance would be met without sacrificing space or volumes. Since the increased space would potentially provide more computers for public use, everyone, including those who can't afford it, would have access to technology and the Internet. Statistics relating square footage and volumes to population size confirm the fact that our existing library is deficient. Therefore, the majority of the DTA Board agreed the need exists.

•What about the existing building?

The historical significance and sentiment of the existing library building and a general resistance to change was recognized and appreciated by the DTA Board. The MA Board of Library Commissioners said that since renovation of the existing building has so many problems, it would not qualify for a grant. Also in order to comply with ADA regulations, renovation of the existing building would result in decreased stack space. Some Board

•Is the Upper Alden Building even suitable for renovation?

The only way the Town would receive the public funds is by renovation of an existing facility. This fact, in addition to the sentiment for the Upper Alden building and the desire to preserve Duxbury's first high school built in 1927, were reasons the DTA Board concluded renovation far outweighs new construction.

•Is this a \$6 million project or a \$3 million project?

The Town would receive \$2,185,000 in State funds; \$200,000 in Federal funds; and \$940,000 in private funds. Municipal funding would be \$3,000,000 and be included within the regular operating budget. An override would not be involved and the tax rate would not be affected. Therefore, the fact is the project will cost the Town \$3,000,000. The DTA Board concluded it is a \$3,000,000 project creating a \$6,300,000 long-

term asset for the Town. The article contains a contingent provision assuring the Town cost will be capped at \$3,000,000.

In summary, the DTA Board supports the viewpoint of the Library trustees, who were in fact elected by the townspeople, and the opinion of the selectmen and the Fiscal Advisory Committee. The need for an expanded facility definitely exists, the Upper Alden Building matches the space needs, and it is a good, financial investment. We commend the Library trustees for their dedicated work and diligence in providing timely information to the voter.